

The Corrections Citizens Advisory Group (CCAG) was established by the Commissioner of Corrections in June 2004 as a working group of various citizen advocates and other interested parties to create the foundation of a citizens advisory group. The purpose of the proposed advisory group was to review systemic issues and advise the Commissioner/Department on how best to reach the Department's stated goals. The Citizens Advisory Group was officially convened in September 2004. The group has met quarterly since that time. In 2005, two additional meetings were held to address group issues. Members of the Citizens Advisory Group include offender advocates, non-profit providers of treatment and transitional housing, victims' services providers, business people, representatives of the faith community, prisoner rights, protection advocates and other concerned citizens.

Over the past few months, it has become apparent to me and to members of the group that the current model for CCAG is not effective. With this in mind, I propose a new structure to engage all of Vermont citizens in the work of the Department. This new model is outlined below. The major change to the group is that it no longer has formal membership. Instead it will operate as a "Corrections Town Meeting." All members of the public will be invited to attend. This new model will give the Department an opportunity to hear new voices and establish new relationships with the community.

I welcome your questions and comments regarding this new model. Taking your comments, I will roll this out with an effective date of October 1, 2012 and have the first meeting scheduled during the fourth quarter of calendar year 2012.

## **Vermont Department of Corrections**

### **Citizen's Advisory Group**

**8/1/2012**

#### **Purpose**

The DOC believes that community participation and support are essential for the successful delivery of correctional services. To achieve our goals of transparency and collaboration we will work with the citizens of Vermont through a Corrections Citizens Advisory Group (CCAG) to review systemic issues and advise the Department on how best to reach it's stated goals. The Advisory Group does not have formal membership. It is open to all members of the public.

## **Meetings**

- The Corrections Advisory Group will meet no less than quarterly.
- Meetings will be 2 hours in length.
- The meeting will be held in a central location.
- Members of the public will sign in.
- Anyone who wishes to speak will indicate their intention on the sign-in sheet. All speakers will have a time limit of four minutes. Written comments will also be accepted by citizens, which will be read by a DOC staff member, so the information is publicly recorded.

## **DOC Responsibilities**

- Assign a staff member to act as primary staff for all of the meetings.
- Assure that at least one member of the DOC Senior Management Team attends the meeting.
- Prepare and post the agenda five business days prior to the meeting.
- Post meeting minutes and Department response/action plan on the internet within ten business days of the meeting.